

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00

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FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PONTA DELGADA 0171

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EO: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PO, US

SUBJECT: FLA COUP PLANS FOR AZORES

REF: (A) PONTA DELGADA 162

(B) SECTO 2075

1. CONSOFFS SPOKE TO FLA SOURCE ANTONIO GOMES DEMENESES SUNDAY EVENING. I RELAYED USG POSITION PER REFTEL BRAVO. GOMES EXPRESSED NO SURPRISE, AND SAID FLA WOULD GO AHEAD WITH ITS COUP PLANS ANYWAY. HE SPECULATED THAT LOCAL ARMY COMMANDER, MIRANDA, WOULD NOT JOIN IN COUP IN ABSENCE USG GUARANTEES. HOWEVER, GOMES DID NOT EXPECT MIRANDA TO OPPOSE FLA COUP.

2. GOMES TOLD US FLA WILL ACT SOON, BUT WAS NOT SPECIFIC. HE CLAIMED FLA HAS PROFESSIONALLY DESIGNED PLAN FOR TAKING OVER ISLANDS AND WAS CONFIDENT OF SUCCESS. FLA NEEDS ONLY TO WORK OUT POST-INDEPENDENCE ECONOMIC ARRANGEMENTS BEFORE IT CAN ACT.

3. GOMES ALLEGED FLA HAS FOREIGN SUPPORT. HE PERSONALLY DID NOT KNOW SOURCES, BUT GUESSED THEY FRENCH AND BIG BUSINESS, POSSIBLY ITT AND NESTLE.

4. GOMES DISCOUNTED POSSIBILITY OF SIGNIFICANT RESISTANCE TO FLA ACTION. HE CLAIMED NEITHER ARMY NOR POLICE WOULD OPPOSE FLA,
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NAVAL UNITS ON SAO MIGUEL INSIGNIFICANT, AND AIR FORCE ON

TERCEIRA HAS ONLY ONE SMALL PLANE AND AIR FORCE TROOPS NO GREAT CONCERN. HE SAYS FLA HAS IDENTIFIED KEY LEFTIST LEADERS IN AZORES, AND BY PREVENTING LEADERS FROM ACTING, FLA COULD PARALYZE ENTIRE LEFTIST OPPOSITION. GOMES DISMISSED LIKLIHOOD OF LISBON SENDING TROOPS TO RETAKE ISLANDS.

5. GOMES INDICATED BELIEF THAT FLA HAS TIME ON ITS SIDE. HE PREDICTED FURTHER MOVE TO LEFT IN LISBON, GOP BY COMING LESS ABLE TO REACT EFFECTIVELY AND GROWING AZOREAN DISCONTENT OVER LISBON ECONOMIC POLICY. THESE TRENDS WOULD INCREASE ACTIVE SUPPORT FOR FLA.

6. COMMENT: WE HAVE IMPRESSION THE FLA COUP ATTEMPT NOT IMMINENT. MOVEMENT HAS LOOSE ENDS TO TIE UP. ALTHOUGH IN PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS FLA MEMBERS HAVE SAID TIME IS RIPE IF COUP NOW, MOVEMENT LEADERS MAY AGREE WITH GOMES ANALYSIS IN PARA FIVE AND BE COUNTING ON THESE FACTORS TO MAKE ITS TASK EASIER.

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